



August, 2019

The early years  
matter!



### Message From Our Executive Director -

*Happy August! I don't know where the summer went, but the start of school is upon us once again. This is always the time of year that I miss teaching the most. (Okay, the summers were pretty great too!) There is just something special about a classroom and a new group of students. It is a chance to re-set for some or a chance to make a mark for others. Unfortunately, for many of those entering Kindergarten across the State there may also be those students that just aren't ready to start the year for any number of reasons. Ready At Five knows that the early years matter. We believe that every child in Maryland should have the foundational skills needed for success in school, career and life. You can count on Ready At Five to encourage meaningful family engagement, promote awareness about the value of high quality early care and education and provide top-notch professional development opportunities to early care and education professionals so that they can deliver valuable learning experiences to all of the children in their care. Keep reading to find out more about our December Symposium featuring Dr. Junlei Li...I hope to see you there!*

*Fondly,*  
*Keri Hyde*

## **August is Get Ready For Kindergarten Month!**

Kindergarten is an essential prerequisite for your child's education. Research into student behavior in kindergarten is useful in predicting academic performance in first and second grade. Kindergarten can also be a stressful experience for any child. Getting them ready is important. Putting your child in social situations ahead of time will help tremendously. Attending birthday parties, family gatherings, summer camping with friends and enrollment in social activities are excellent ways to get your little one socially savvy.

You can also help your child better prepare for kindergarten by assisting them to memorize basic information, such as correct spelling of the name, address, and phone number. If your child is receptive, think about teaching the basic of letters and numbers beforehand. Work with them on developing some degree of nimbleness, as well as some basic physical activities, such as tying shoes.

Helping your child get excited for the transition of kindergarten is an important step you can take together. Plan a visit to the classroom with your child to meet the teacher and see the facility. Get your child a full medical check-up, including eyes and ears. Set up a breakfast and bedtime routine at least a month in advance. Get necessary school supplies. Ask your child's teacher for a list. Let your child choose colors and styles.

Document your child's first day of school with photos. Use #GetReadyForKindergartenMonth in your social media correspondence. Never give out your child's name or location on social media.



**Save the Date for our School Readiness Symposium!**

Dr. Junlei Li will be the Keynote Presenter at our next [School Readiness Symposium](#) on December 11, 2019 at Turf Valley Conference Center. He is the Saul Zaentz senior lecturer in early childhood education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. His research and practice focuses on understanding and supporting the work of helpers—those who serve children and families on the frontlines of education and social services. Li studied and learned from a wide range of developmental settings with low resources but high-quality practices, including orphanages, childcare, classrooms, and community youth programs. He developed the "[Simple Interactions](#)" approach to help identify what ordinary people do extraordinarily well with children in everyday moments and made that the basis for promoting positive system change. Li frequently delivers keynote presentations and workshops for national, state, and international conferences focused on improving practices, programs, and policies for children, families, and professionals, with a particular emphasis on early childhood development. He teaches about improving human interactions and supporting adult helpers at HGSE and the Zaentz Professional Learning Academy. Li's work is significantly influenced and inspired by the pioneering work of Fred Rogers (creator of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*). He previously served as the Co-Director and Rita M. McGinley Professor for Early Learning and Children's Media at the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College. Registration will open in the Fall.



## Pat Marks, Ph.D. Joins Ready At Five's Executive Leadership Committee



Ready At Five is pleased to welcome Pat Marks, Ph.D. to our Executive Leadership Committee. Deaconess Pat Marks, Ph.D. is a dedicated criminal justice advocate called to promote human development, alleviate suffering, and eradicate the causes of injustice. She actively promotes criminal justice reform and effectively engages volunteers and faith communities in providing services and resources for children and their families. Pat serves on the Leadership Team of Putting Mercy into Criminal Justice ([www.mercyjustice.net](http://www.mercyjustice.net)). She is active in the Maryland Alliance for Justice

Reform focusing on re-entry issues and in ReThink Justice DC envisioning a new criminal justice system based on restorative practices.

Pat spent the earlier part of her career in early childhood education, getting her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education from University of Maryland College Park, and then working with the Montgomery County schools as a Grants Specialist. As her career

took her into prison ministry, she is particularly interested in early childhood issues as they relate to the school-to-prison pipeline, and how that trajectory can be changed. "I delight in Ready At Five's focus on all aspects of children's development as they grow and thrive to become and shape the future and I fully agree that the early years matter, in fact I believe they matter the most."

Pat is a graduate of Leadership Maryland Class of 2002 and Leadership Fairfax (VA) Class of 1992. She received her doctorate in Education from the University of Maryland and holds Master's degrees from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC and Wheelock College in Boston. Pat was commissioned as a Deaconess in 2005 concurrent to graduating from Wesley Theological Seminary and receiving the first Certificate in Missions for work in social justice.

"We are delighted to welcome Pat to Ready At Five's work, eager to learn from her experience with a critical parent population, and to include her perspective and voice in our efforts to improve outcomes for all children across Maryland," said Meredith Callanan, Chair of Ready At Five's Executive Leadership Committee.

The goal of Ready At Five's Executive Leadership Committee is to support its mission-*we are committed to comprehensive school readiness for all Maryland children*. The organization does this by providing annual Maryland school readiness data and national research across the state, delivering innovative practices and resources, generating public awareness and engaging various constituents, and convening stakeholders for action and impact.

**Join The Family Tree for our annual family festival and walk!**

**Fun for all ages. All FREE!**

September 7, 2019  
10am - 1:30pm  
Lake Montebello  
2030 East 32nd Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(on the grounds of Montebello Elementary/Middle)

**10th Annual Brent A. Rosenberg**

**FAMFEST**

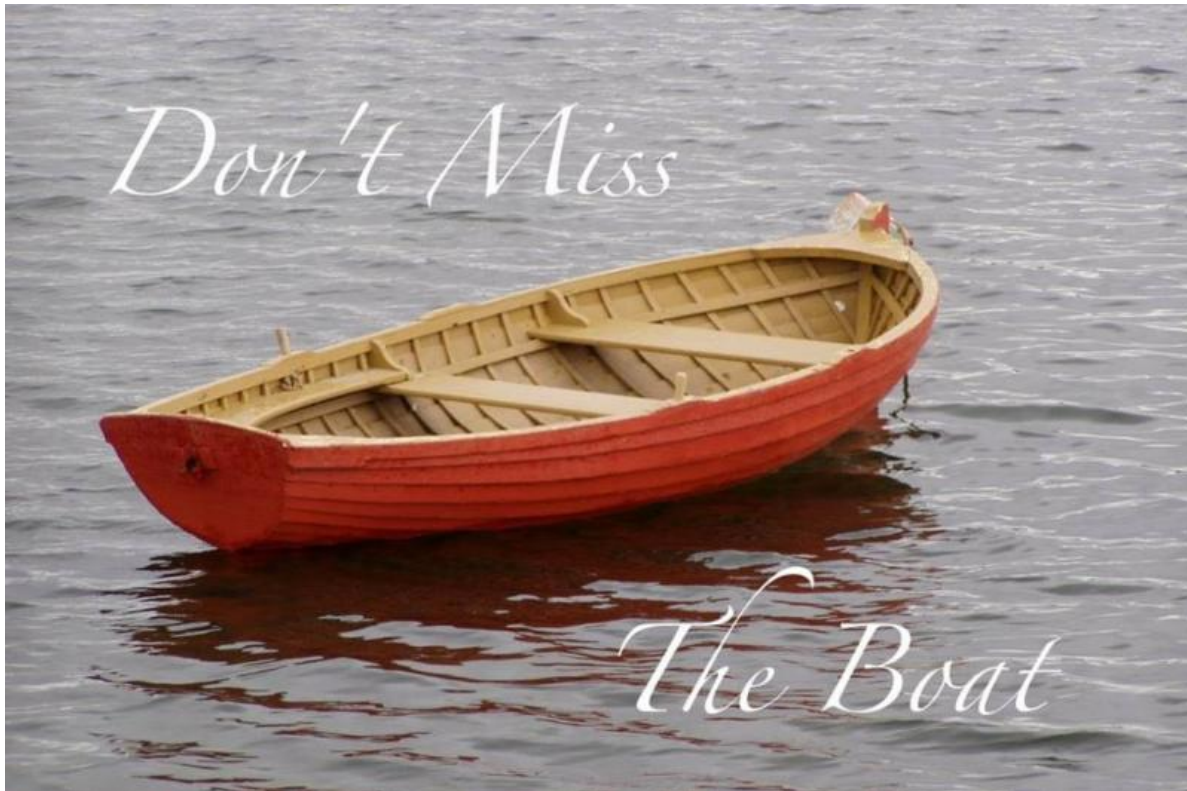
**The Family Tree**  
9.7.2019

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# school readiness symposium

ready a five

**Don't Forget About Registration Costs for Ready At Five's [School Readiness Symposia](#) When Planning Your Next Year's Budgets!**



## **Children's Eye Health and Safety Month**

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month is a timely reminder to prepare our children for the classroom and athletics. Good vision and eye protection go a long way to success in school. Not only that but protecting those blue, brown, green and hazel eyes on and off the court should be a priority, too. During Children's eye health and safety month, parents be sure to schedule a routine eye exam. Have them fitted with the correct prescription lenses depending on their required needs. Make sure students wear the required protective gear for their classes and athletic activities, too. Encourage your students to follow the teacher's instructions for their own safety and others.



## Featured Resources

### Ready At Five Has What You're Looking For - School Readiness Publications!

Please [click here](#) for the order form or visit our [website](#) to find out about the [programs](#) and [resources](#) that we offer.

► [Donate Now](#)

Help us as we work to ensure that all children in Maryland have the foundational skills needed for future success in school, career and life.



Ready At Five is a self-sustaining program of the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT), and does not receive funding from the MBRT.

**One-time or monthly donations of \$100 or more are sought and gratefully accepted to expand Ready At Five's impact.** To contribute this; or any, amount [click here](#)

**Ready At Five**

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